

Unapproved
SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 2, 2009

The Wethersfield Town Council held a special meeting on Tuesday, June 2, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, CT.

Present: Councilor Cascio, Console, Forrest, Hemmann, Kotkin, Walsh, Deputy Mayor Montinieri, and Chairperson Adil.

Absent: Councilor Roberts

Also present: Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, and Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 5:05 p.m., Councilor Forrest moved **“TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE TOWN MANAGER CONTRACT”** seconded by Councilor Kotkin. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0. No motions were made and no votes were taken during executive session.

At 5:16 p.m., Councilor Console moved **“TO LEAVE EXECUTIVE SESSION”** seconded by Councilor Kotkin. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk, took attendance.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

AWARD OF BID – ROAD MILLING BID – GARRITY ASPHALT RECLAIMING INC.

Councilor Kotkin moved **“TO AWARD THE BID FOR PAVEMENT MILLING AND RECLAMATION TO GARRITY ASPHALT RECLAIMING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$35,000”** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that this is part of the Town’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This bid is a piggyback on a State bid. The Town is still waiting to see how much Town Aid to Roads (TAR) money the State will be giving to Towns.

Councilor Kotkin asked which streets would be done.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that this money will pay for Brimfield Road.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

WAIVER OF POLICE FEES – KEANE FOUNDATION 5K WALK/RUN

Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved **“TO WAIVE 50 PERCENT OF THE POLICE FEES FOR THE KEANE FOUNDATION ANNUAL 5K WALK/RUN ON MAY 30, 2009”** seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Keane Foundation held a very successful run last Sunday. The Foundation is requesting a waiver of half of the police fees. There is money available for this waiver, this year. There will not be funds available for these waivers next year. She said that she will put together a list of organizations that requested waivers this year and contact them to let them know fee waivers will not be granted next year.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

TRANSFER OF \$15,000 FOR PHASE 2 ENVIRONMENTAL WORK – PURCHASE OF WILKUS PROPERTIES

Councilor Walsh moved **“TO AUTHORIZE A TRANSFER OF \$15,000 FROM THE CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT #1910 59250 TO ACCOUNT #3430 52220 AND TO AWARD A CONTRACT FOR PHASE II ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS OF THE WILKUS PROPERTIES TO HRP ASSOCIATES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$15,000”** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that HRP prepared the Phase I analysis and it came back very positive. Some clean up has been done and the Town now needs to have a Phase II analysis completed to make sure all of the cleanup has been completed. It is needed for the closing and for the State grant.

Councilor Walsh moved **“TO AMEND THE MOTION TO SAY TO AUTHORIZE A TRANSFER OF UP TO \$15,000 FROM THE CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT #1910 59250 TO ACCOUNT #3430 52220 AND TO AWARD A CONTRACT FOR PHASE II ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS OF THE WILKUS PROPERTIES TO HRP ASSOCIATES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$15,000”** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE to the amendment. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Councilor Cascio asked if the Wilkus heirs had been asked to pay for the Phase II analysis.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said they were approached, but are not willing to pay for the second analysis.

Councilor Console asked who paid for the first analysis.

Bonnie Therrien said that the Land Trust paid for the first analysis and the Wilkus heirs paid for the contractors to complete the cleanup.

Councilor Console asked why this is part of the State Grant money. The house and barns will not be part of the grant.

Bonnie Therrien said that the barn parcel and farm land both had cleanup work. She said that she was very pleased with how little cleanup needed to be done.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the \$15,000 would be reimbursed by the bond.

Bonnie Therrien said that she does not recommend that the money be taken from the bond. There is \$190,000 left in the contingency account and there is only one month left in the fiscal year.

A roll call vote was taken. Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE to the amended motion. Councilors Cascio and Console voted NAY to the amended motion. The motion passed 6-2-0.

PURCHASE AND SALES AGREEMENT – WILKUS PROPERTIES

John W. Bradley, Town Attorney, said that he asked that this item be put on the agenda in the hopes that a sales agreement would be finalized. That didn't happen, so this item will have to be revisited.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that this item can wait for the June 15th Town Council meeting or a special meeting could be called.

Councilor Console said that he would be out of Town next week.

REPORT ON THE BUILDING CONDITIONS - WILKUS PROPERTY AND DISCUSSION ON THE USE OF THE STRUCTURES

Councilor Forrest moved **“TO HAVE TOWN STAFF DEVELOP COST ESTIMATES TO BRING THE BUILDINGS ON THE WILKUS PROPERTIES UP TO CODE TO UTILIZE THESE STRUCTURES FOR GENERAL PURPOSE”** seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the building conditions were questioned at a previous meeting. Town staff from the Building Department went out and inspected the buildings. The

report is attached. The Wilkus family is willing to take down the barns if the Town doesn't want to keep them. She said that it would be helpful to know what the Town Council would like to do with the property.

Chairperson Adil said that he heard that the Wilkus family will take the barns down within six months of the sale.

Bonnie Therrien said that she had not heard that and would check with their Attorney.

Brian O'Connor, Chief Building Official, said that there are four main structures on the property: the house, a one car detached garage, the north barn, and the south barn. Staff performed a visual inspection only, nothing was torn apart. His recommendations include bringing the mechanicals up to date and make the structures more energy efficient. These recommendations are not necessary for Code compliance. The property could be sold without doing any work. The house is in good condition and the garage is usable. There are other small structures, like lean-tos on the property. They are in poor condition and need to be removed. One of them has a collapsed roof.

Chairperson Adil asked how much work would be involved for Town staff.

Mike Turner, Director of Public Works, said that if the Town Council wants staff to remove only the small structures, it would take a day or two to complete.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the Town put the house on the market, is there any work that is required to be done on it.

Brian O'Connor, Chief Building Official, said that the house is in good condition. The well and pump are not working. That would have to be fixed.

Chairperson Adil said if the Town is going to keep the property, the Town should probably hook it up to the MDC sewers.

Brian O'Connor, Chief Building Official, said that it would cost about \$14,000 to run the water line out from Willow Street to the house. The house is already connected to the MDC for sewage.

Councilor Cascio asked if it is possible for the families to take the barns.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Wilkus family will be responsible for removing them if the Town does not wish to own them.

Councilor Cascio asked if the barns were included in the appraisals.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said they were not.

Councilor Cascio said that the community is paying a lot of money for the properties. He suggested that the Town sell the barns.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the money used for this purchase is coming out of the land acquisition fund and is not part of the bond money.

Chairperson Adil said that the Town Council needs to determine the best use of the land. He would like to have a committee formed to explore ideas and make recommendations to the Town Council on the best use of the land.

Councilor Forrest said that he believes that the Town Council should wait until the property is acquired before a committee is formed.

Councilor Walsh said that farmers are working the property. Will the farming continue?

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that she has a call into the Wilkus family's attorney to find out if the farming is continuing. She said that the fields need to be hayed.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that there was some discussion about sectioning off the house and barns from the other properties to keep the Town's options open. He agreed that the committee should be established after the purchase is completed. The value of selling the parcel is an option. He said that to hay the property, a farmer will need a barn.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that it would be helpful to establish a committee now so that when the properties are purchased, the Town will have some direction to go in for maintenance.

Councilor Hemmann asked what is the timeframe for the cost estimates. She said that the Town has to be able to maintain what it has. It does not always do that now.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the report should be back in four to six weeks.

Chairperson Adil asked when the closing would be.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that she had hoped it would close by the end of June.

John Bradley, Town Attorney, said that it is premature to set a closing date without the Phase II results.

Mike Turner, Director of Public Works, said that it will be about five weeks before the Phase II plans are returned. The work can begin next week.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved **“TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO TAKE PRELIMINARY PRE-SALE ACTIVITY IN RESPECT TO ASSEMBLING A TEAM TO EXAMINE OPTIONS FOR THE PROPERTY, POST SALE, THAT BEST OPTIMIZES ITS UTILIZATION POTENTIAL”** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Chairperson Adil asked that any residents interested in serving on the committee should contact the Town Manager’s office.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

At 5:43 p.m., Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, left the meeting.

APPOINTMENT OF TOWN MANAGER

Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved **“TO AUTHORIZE MAYOR ANDREW ADIL TO SIGN AN EMPLOYEMENT AGREEMENT FOR THE NEW TOWN MANAGER WITH JEFFERY K. BRIDGES AND AUTHORIZE HIS EMPLOYEMENT TO BEGIN AUGUST 1, 2009”** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that efforts behind the scenes were completed over the past few weeks, after an extensive search. He is looking forward to working with Jeff Bridges. He also wanted to recognize Bonnie Therrien’s contributions to the Town. He is pleased that the full Town Council supports the new Town Manager.

Chairperson Adil echoed the Deputy Mayor’s comments. He thanked Bonnie Therrien for her service and said that Jeff Bridges is an intelligent, enthusiastic, and energetic person and will fit well in Town. He also thanked Councilors Hemmann and Roberts for their work with the consultants during the hiring process.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5:46 p.m., Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Walsh. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk